



Fall 2001/ Winter 2002

How DSHS determines child care subsidy rates

By Marna Miller,
DSHS Research and Data
Analysis

What are child care subsidies?

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) subsidizes child care costs for many low income families in Washington State. In June 2001, DSHS subsidized care for 80,000 children.

The subsidy programs help low income families to go to work or school by paying part of the cost of child care. Parents pay part of the cost and the state pays the rest. The most a provider can be paid (combining the parent's payment and the DSHS payment) is the provider's usual rate, or the DSHS maximum rate, whichever is less.

About two-thirds of subsidized children receive care in licensed settings (licensed family homes or child care centers). The other children receive care from relatives or in their home. DSHS sets its subsidy rates based on the amount the provider actually charges parents for child care (market rate.)

Why does DSHS survey licensed providers?

DSHS surveys child care providers to learn the rates charged for child care. It then uses rates reported in the surveys to

set subsidy rates that reflect actual market prices. Under federal rules, states must set subsidy rates based on market surveys conducted at least every two years.

When does DSHS survey licensed child care providers?

The Department of Social and Health Services first surveyed licensed child care providers in 1987. Since 1990, DSHS has conducted surveys of licensed family homes and child care centers every two years.

Who is interviewed?

The surveyors attempt to contact all licensed child care centers (about 2,000). Because over 7,000 family homes are licensed, surveyors attempt to contact a sample of about 2,000 homes. In counties with fewer than 40 homes, all homes are sampled. The more homes in a county, the smaller the proportion included in the sample. In the largest counties, 18 percent of homes are sampled. In the most recent surveys (2000), 2,004 centers and 2,008 family homes were contacted; 1,414 centers and 1,385 family homes completed the survey.

How are the surveys conducted?

Surveys are conducted mainly over the telephone by a professional survey research organization at Washington State University. Because centers and homes are quite different, two separate questionnaires are used: one for centers and another for homes. However, the same kind of information is gathered from both types of facilities.

What do the surveys tell us about child care prices?

Many factors affect the price of child care. From survey data we know that in general:

- Centers are more expensive than family homes.

- Child care costs more for young children than for older children.
- Child care costs more in large cities than in rural areas.

How does DSHS set the maximum subsidy rates set for child care providers?

- The State Legislature sets the child care budget and provides additional money to raise rates.
- Using survey data, DSHS sets new rates at a uniform percentile that will keep costs within the budget.

This approach gives parents using a DSHS subsidy equal access to child care regardless of where they live.

What does it mean when child care rates are set at a certain percentile?

In November of 1999, subsidy rates were set at the 71st percentile. The 1998 provider surveys were used to identify the 71st percentiles for each age category/facility type/geographic unit. For example, seventy-one percent of all preschoolers attending child care centers

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I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the many family home child care providers who responded to our survey on regulations for small family homes. Your intense caring, honesty, passion and compassion were evident in your comments. I truly appreciate the job you do every day for our children, and the time you spent completing the survey.

Although we have not yet finished compiling the results, there are some general themes I'd like to share. One regulation that was mentioned a number of times was the STARS training. Many of you supported the training. A number of you commented that it was difficult to attend the training, given the long hours you spend caring for kids. I support

training because it supports quality child care. It is important for the training to be relevant to your needs. This work of helping to shape the lives of young children is extremely significant. We all experience continual growth and development as we become more skilled at our work. I hope that training will lead to

higher compensation the more professionalized your work becomes.

Many of you expressed that you support regulations in family child care, especially rules about health and safety. But you also feel homes are not centers and that licensing practice should honor that difference. Additionally, many of you expressed concerns and had questions regarding subsidy rates. Please read the article in this *Link* regarding subsidy rates. I hope it answers your questions.

Thank you again for the valuable service you provide for children, and for taking the time to respond to the survey. I am excited about the opportunities for all of us in the field of child care and early learning.

Olympia LINK

*By Rachael Langen, Director
Division of Child Care and
Early Learning*

Two new administrators join new Division of Child Care & Early Learning

Welcome to Sonja Griffin, Administrator of Program Development

My journey in this profession began in 1986 as a teacher at Pacific Oaks College, in Pasadena, California, at the Children's School. Since that time I have worked in a variety of roles and settings, but my passion for this work has only deepened with time. Prior to joining DCCEL, I was the coordinator of the King County Child

Care Program. I have been an adjunct faculty member at Pacific Oaks College, Northwest, and former Child Care instructor with Renton Technical College. I have served on numerous committees, task forces, and boards, including the 4C's, The Children's Alliance, Child Care Works, and the African American Child Care Task Force. I am an active member of The Black Child Development Institute, Seattle Affiliate, and Jack and Jill of America, Seattle Chapter. I am also the proud mom of Kalila who is 10 years old and reminds me daily why children and youth deserve and need high quality child care and out of school time choices.

of the child care programs in Washington State. I am very excited about the prospect of joining a team of hard working and experienced staff who are dedicated to the mission of ensuring that quality child care is available for every child that needs it.

My background consists primarily of experience in the field of child protection. I have spent the last nine years working with Child Protective Services in both the Division of Children and Family Services and the Division of Licensed Resources. I have spent the last three years managing the Child Protective Services Section within the Division of Licensed Resources. While this program dealt exclusively with child safety issues in licensed care, I believe the experience provided me with a statewide perspective on a variety of issues that affect child care providers on a regular basis.

Having three young children of my own, I can truly appreciate the wonderful work you do each and every day for children. I look forward to working with the new division and to working toward the resolution of issues facing child care providers in Washington State.

The LINK

The Link is a quarterly publication of the Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCEL), Economic Services Administration, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), for child care professionals. Send questions, comments, or ideas to the Coordinator, The Link, DSHS/DCCEL, P.O. Box 45700, Olympia, WA 98504-5700.

John Atherton, *Assistant Secretary,
Economic Services Administration*
Rachael Langen, *Director,
DSHS Division of Child Care & Early Learning*
Leslie Edwards-Hill, *Newsletter Coordinator*
Irene Hopman, *Editor*
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Mike Tornquist heads Policy Section

Greetings to all. My name is Mike Tornquist, and I am the new administrator of the Policy Section of the Division of Child Care and Early Learning. The Policy Section will combine program managers from the licensing, subsidy and health advisory programs in hopes of providing more standardized policy for all

Ask your licensor

By Leslie Edwards-Hill
Licensing Program Manager

Q: *I am a family home provider and I want to be licensed for more than 12 children. I have a large home and enough assistants. Is it possible to do this?*

A: Thank you for asking this important question. However, the law only allows for a maximum of 12 children in a family child care home.

This is in RCW 74.15.020 (Definitions), which says: "The following terms shall mean: (e) 'Family day-care provider' means a licensed day-care provider who regularly provides day care for not more than 12 children in the provider's home in the family living quarters."

Therefore, your licensor cannot give you a waiver to have more than 12 children in your home, since we cannot waive a law.

However, if you have enough space and feel that you want to expand your business, you could consider becoming licensed as a center.

If you decide to pursue this, you will need a separate space (such as a daylight basement separate from the family living quarters.) There are also local zoning considerations, such as being zoned as a business in a residential area, and additional health and fire inspection requirements.

One parent's thoughts

As I dropped my children off at daycare this morning, my two-year-old son began to cry. I sat down with him for a minute to console him. Then I told him I had to leave for work. Then I began to think about what is more important to me, more important to him. Is it worth it for me to be a few minutes late for work while I comfort my child? Of course it is.

This past week has changed my life. Changed the way I feel, the way I look at things, people. How maybe we could all be a little nicer to each other. Be thankful for our families and what we already have. Most of us are too busy to pay attention to things that don't concern us, until something like this happens.

Today when I pick my children up from daycare, I will hug them tight and thank God that I still have them and they have me. I hope everyone else will do the same.

Kelly Grozier, Office Assistant Senior, Bremerton CSO, September 18, 2001

Start babies out on their backs

The Washington State SIDS Foundation supports the stand of the American Academy of Pediatrics on Sleep Position and Sleep Conditions of Infants.

First and foremost: All babies under one year old who have no medical conditions contraindicating it should be put down on their backs. Once a baby develops the ability to roll over, you do not need to keep rolling them back over onto their backs. Developmentally, this usually happens at about five to six months of age.

Even after they can roll over on their own always continue to START them out on their BACKS, NOT side and NOT tummy, up to one year old.

Secondly, regarding blankets in the crib: The preference would be for babies to wear blanket sleepers or other sleepers adequate for maintaining a comfortable body temperature.

If a blanket is required, the baby should be moved toward the foot of the crib ("Feet to Foot"). A lightweight blanket may be used. It must be large enough to go across the baby with the top of the blanket at the underarm level and tuck in under the sides and end of the mattress. Older babies who are rolling well and turning in the crib would be safer with blanket sleepers.

No other objects should be in the crib (NO pillows, NO stuffed animals, NO burp rags, NO folded blankets used as pillows).

First Annual Division of Child Care and Early Learning Fall Conference

On Oct. 11 and 12, approximately 150 Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCEL) staff from around the state converged on Silverdale for the first annual DCCEL 2001 Fall conference. Attendees included DCCEL headquarters staff, regional managers, child care licensing staff, child care health surveyors, public health consultants, and some child care resource and referral staff.

Participants chose among 16 workshops, heard three

keynote speakers, and discussed topics such as cultural diversity and managing change in the workplace.

While the former Office of Child Care Policy (OCCP) put on an annual fall child care conference for the past decade, the 2001 conference was unique because it happened barely a month after the formation of DCCEL, which is now in the Economic Services Administration. As such, this year's conference was an important community-building activity for new division members.

Region 1

EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS

BY ALICE ANDERSON

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME LICENSOR

It was with excitement and anticipation of “good things” to come that I began my work as a family child care licensor on Aug. 6. I quickly learned that I made a wise decision because I saw that I had joined an office and community of supportive, fun and fun-loving early childhood professionals.

Since then I have been asking myself, why did I wait so long to explore my career options in Washington?

As I reflected on this I realize that I waited because I had an equally professional, supportive, fun and funny team that I worked with at the Panhandle Health District Child Care Resource Center.

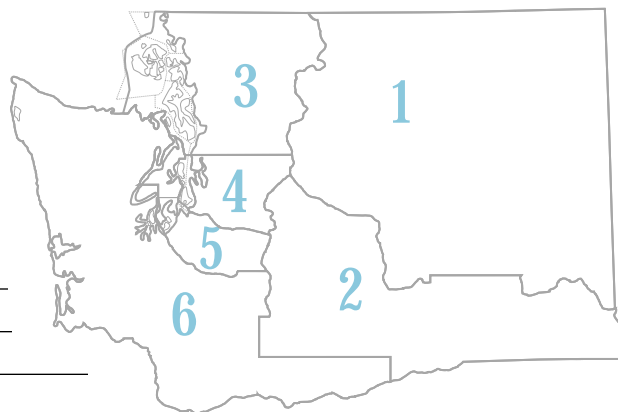
In my former job, working with our community partners, we had designed and implemented the North Idaho Child Care Training Project. This is a program that offers 35 hours of annual training to the 550 child care providers in Idaho's Panhandle.

In 1997 we put in place a CDA program at North Idaho College and brought the TEACH program to Idaho. In 1999 we updated and strengthened the City of Coeur d'Alene's Child Care Ordinance and created the first city Child Care Commission in Idaho.

This work kept me happy and satisfied for five years. Then I became restless for a new challenge. I wanted to work where there were statewide policies and training requirements in place, which are designed to help families make sure that their children are cared for in appropriate ways and in smaller groups.

The State of Washington's Division of Child Care and Early Learning provided this opportunity. I am looking forward to working here for a long, long time.

Regional LINKS



Region 2

GOODBYE ROSEMARY,

HELLO DEBBIE

BY KARRI LIVINGSTON

REGIONAL MANAGER

Region 2, Division of Child Care and Early Learning said goodbye to **Rosemary Barnes** on July 31, 2001. She retired from her home licensing position, licensing homes in Walla Walla, Richland, Finley, Burbank, Dayton and Clarkston. She licensed homes in these cities and surrounding areas for eight years.

We will miss her wisdom, careful judgement, and wonderful sense of humor. Providers will miss her caring, helpful ways and the knack she had for listening to a problem and helping to solve it.

We all wish Rosemary the best of luck in her new life and hope she is stopping to smell the roses.

Debbie Hardenbrook joined our Region 2 unit on Sept. 17. She will license homes in Walla Walla, Richland, West Richland, Finley, Burbank and the surrounding areas.

Debbie comes to us from the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in Richland.

Prior to her experience in DCFS she was a family advocate and lead teacher in a therapeutic child care program. She also has extensive experience in providing child development training to adults. Please welcome Debbie to her new job. We are very excited that she has accepted this new challenge in her life.

Region 3

A MESSAGE TO FAMILY CHILD CARE

HOME PROVIDERS

BY VERONICA ESPINOZA

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME LICENSOR

My name is **Veronica Espinoza**. I am a new licensor in Region 3. I currently serve the Island County providers, as well as the Spanish-speaking providers in Skagit and Whatcom Counties. Although I have only been with the Division of Child Care and Early Learning for two months, I had been working with providers before becoming a licensor.

Prior to licensing I was a Child Protective Services (CPS) social worker for almost seven years.

When I was a CPS worker I saw providers as partners in the protection and welfare of children. I often entered into partnerships with child care providers for some of the children on my caseload.

In CPS language, child care homes are identified as protective factors. This means that child care homes are a safety net for abused and neglected children. As a CPS worker I would use child care homes to provide the nurturing, stimulation and social skills that neglected children often lacked in their own

homes. In some cases, providers served as models for inexperienced mothers, or mothers who didn't know how to parent because they themselves had not been well-parented.

Other times, it was just providing care for the children while their mothers got their lives back together so they could parent their own children on a full-time basis.

For children who had been in a child care home and then entered foster care, I would try very hard to continue the child with the same child care provider to allow some continuity and familiarity in the child's life.

Therefore, as a child care provider, if you have ever thought that you were just a person staying home taking care of children, think again!

You are a partner in your community with all of the other agencies who strive to improve children's lives, ensuring a safer, healthier and happier present and future.

To a child you may be the only person who says something nice to them. You may be the only one who pays attention to them. You may be the only one who serves them a nutritious meal. You may be the only person they know that no matter what they do, you are not going to physically hurt them. To a child your home may be heaven on earth.

I am happy to be working with you to ensure your home provides a place that promotes the health, safety and development of children. I greatly respect and appreciate the hard work that you do.

Together we can make a difference and a brighter future for the children in our communities.

Region 4

HELPFUL TIPS TO HELP CHILDREN THROUGH
TOUGH TIMES

By SHEAU-PYNG LI

FAMILY CHILD CARE LICENSOR

Since the tragic event happened on Sept. 11, have you thought about how the young children in your care cope with the

horrible events happening in their lives? The followings are excerpted from an article distributed by Judith A. Myers, Purdue University.

• **Don't assume that the kids don't know about it.** Children are exposed to the events as soon as they can watch TV or interact with others who are consumers of the news. Not talking about it does not protect children.

• **Be available and "askable."** Let kids know that it is okay to talk about the unpleasant events. Listen to what they think and feel. By listening, you can find out if they have misunderstandings, and you can learn more about the support that they need.

• **Share your feelings.** If you tell them about your feelings, you also can tell them about how you deal with the feelings. Be careful not to overwhelm them.

• **Help children use creative outlets like art and music to express their feelings.** Using art, puppets, music, or books might help children open up about their reactions. Be flexible and listen.

• **Reassure young people and help them feel safe.** Children may be afraid that the same tragic events will happen to them.

• **Support children's concern for people they do not know.** Explore ways to help others and ease the pain.

• **Look for feelings beyond fear.** Studies have shown that children also may feel sad or angry. Let children express their full range of emotions. Support the development of caring and empathy.

• **Help children and youth find a course of action.** One important way to reduce stress is to take action. Children may want to write a letter to someone about their feelings or send money to help victims. Let them help to identify the action choices.

• **Take action and get involved in something.** Children who know that their caregivers are working to make a difference feel hope. And hope is one of the most valuable gifts we can give children and ourselves.

Region 4A new staff update:

Pauline Smith -- Licensing assistant for family child care providers. Pauline is bilingual in Spanish and English. She has worked in child care before and has gone out to providers homes with licensors to learn more about the licensing process.

Cynthia Davis -- Family child care home licensor. Cynthia has her master's degree in Deafness Rehabilitation and has provided child care and managed a child care center. She also has taught independent living skills to disabled children and adults. She is a sign language interpreter and a trainer, including STARS-approved training.

Marge Sorlie -- State health advisor (Department of Health). Marge mainly works with center providers on health issues. Her position is now part of the Division of Child Care and Early Learning.

Region 5

MARKETING YOUR CHILD CARE

By JUDY BECKER

CHILD CARE CENTER LICENSOR

This is a time of recession when many parents are faced with being laid off and must remove their children from child care. It becomes essential for child care providers to have a competitive edge in order to meet the needs of their clients. Providers must make their services unique in order to attract the remaining business.

Wendy Roark, of the Office of Economic Development in Tacoma, shared ideas for in-home and center providers to market their services:

- Add-on value - Offer regular lessons such as swimming, karate, or gymnastics. A home provider might offer a quality pre-school program.
- Advertise what it is that sets apart the child care:
 - infant care,
 - night time care,
 - special field trips,
 - transportation to a child's after school events, such as soccer practice or scouts,
 - tutorial time where the provider helps the children complete their homework.

Feed the children dinner, even if closing time is 6 or 6:30 p.m., so that frazzled parents do not have to deal with hungry children when they pick them up.

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Make it a point to advertise that the child care welcomes children with special needs and list the community resources the provider can work with in meeting the special needs of the children and the parents.

If providing infant care, the provider might supply the diapers, formula and food as an add-on. She might advertise an individual educational plan for each infant, promoting early brain development, or that the parents will be provided with written feedback on the baby's day regarding eating, sleeping and diapering.

Wendy also suggested that providers keep their business in the public eye whenever possible.

An idea for next year: rubber band the name and number of their child care to each piece of Halloween candy they give out. Another suggestion is to get sheets of magnetic paper (office supply stores) on which the provider can xerox a sign with the name and number and stick it to the side of their car or van. One provider copied her business card onto the magnetic paper, cut them up, and stuck them on her car with a sign saying, "Please Take One."

Best wishes to providers from Region 5 during these difficult times.

Region 6

NEW STAFF, NEW LOCATION

BY BRONWYN VINCENT

REGIONAL MANAGER

Region 6 is delighted to welcome our new family child care home licensor in the Kelso office, **Irene Higgins**. Irene comes to us from the Division of Children and Family Services Child Protective Services in the Kelso office. She also worked as an Early Childhood Specialist in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program at Centralia College.

She has an extensive educational background in ECE having earned an associate degree in ECE from SCCC and is working on a master's degree from Pacific Oaks College.

Irene was a licensed family child care

home provider for seven years in the Seattle area. She has also been a licensed as a foster parent, and is the proud mother of a two-year-old son. Irene will be licensing family homes in Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and Pacific Counties. She can be reached at (360) 501-2645.

The Region 6 Tumwater office moved into Point Plaza East Building #2 at 6860 Capitol Boulevard (one mile south of the Capitol 5000 Building). Our mailing address is the same: P.O. Box 45716, Olympia, WA 98504-5716.

Our phone numbers have changed. The phone number of Sarah Beckham, administrative secretary, is (360) 725-6663. She provides support to

the regional manager and center licensors.

Naomi Bentz, secretary senior, provides support to the family home licensing supervisor and family home licensors. Her number is (360) 725-6664.

Susan Thomas, family home licensing supervisor, is at (360) 735-6669. Regional Manager Bronwyn Vincent is at (360) 725-6670.

Licensors numbers are: Nancy Rowswell (360) 725-6668; Sue Kormondy (360) 725-6665; Eles Strauss (360) 725-6671; Sharon Neigel (360) 725-6667. Please stay in touch with us.

SIDS through the eyes of a grandfather and licensor

By Victor M. Berdecia, Family Child Care Home Licensor, Region 4B

After my first grandchild died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, I thought that I would never again go through the experience of a child I knew dying from SIDS. The pain cannot be described with words, it is devastating.

Years later while working at the Kent office, I received a call from a police officer saying that a child had just died in a child care home in Federal Way. A doctor's review stated it was from SIDS. For a few minutes, it seemed as though it was my grandchild from a few years earlier; it give me a freezing, frightening feeling in my whole body that made me numb to the bone.

As the police officer was giving me the report I was telling myself, "you need to help and not panic." I went to work as if I had no feeling at all. I couldn't help it. I called the provider and she was inconsolable. I could recognize her feelings as she was trying to explain to me what had happen to the child. She was anxious, worried, hysterical and felt responsible. She was not looking for an answer, she just needed someone who would listen.

For days it felt like this had happened to my family. I went to my supervisor and she allowed me to express the way I was feeling.

A few days later another child died from SIDS in the area. And then suddenly another!

I knew what to do this time -- that I should help the providers and the parents through this sensitive situation and be strong for them. I worked closely with the SIDS foundation.

As I dealt with my own feelings I know what got me through were the people around me -- family, coworkers, my supervisor and Rachael Langen (DCCEL director).

It helps so much just to have people around that can listen without speaking -- just good people who know or may not know exactly what I was going through, but were there for me, and probably thinking, "I hope I don't have to go through what you're going through."

Being a licensor is lots of fun but sometimes you have to be a social worker, father, mother, brother, friend, priest or pastor. It may not be in the job description, but is part of the job.

Disaster or inconvenience? It's your choice

*Danica Mann, Health Educator
Snohomish Health District,
Partners in Child Care*

Emergency preparedness encompasses many different situations. Most people think of earthquakes when they are writing their emergency plan, but many other emergencies are much more likely to occur than earthquakes.

- **Fires:** unfortunately, Eastern Washington is a perfect example of the devastation fires can cause. Do you have an evacuation plan and communication plan in place for a disaster like this?

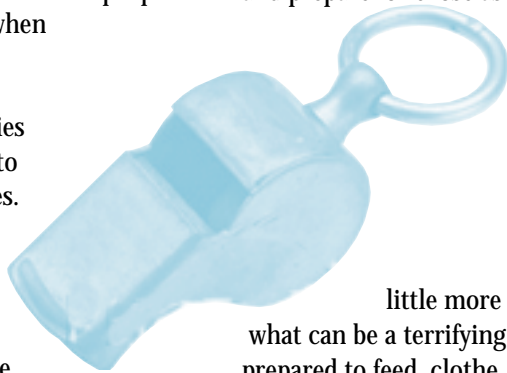
- **Landslides:** most of Western Washington is wet, landslides can cause road blockages as well as other problems. Are you located near a potential landslide area?

- **Volcanoes:** were you aware that Glacier Peak, bordering Chelan County, is the same type of volcano as Mount St. Helens? Mount Rainier and Mount Baker are also active volcanoes. Do you know what to do or where to go if one of these started to erupt?

- **Hazardous Materials:** 76,000 rail cars carrying hazardous materials travel through Snohomish County alone, every year. Are you near railroad tracks? Do you know what the rail cars are carrying in your area? Are you prepared to shelter up in your home until it's safe to leave if one of the cars were to spill?

- **Storms:** including flooding, snow or sub-freezing temperatures. In 2000, Washington State lost 93 people due to coastal storms, flooding and cold weather. What is your plan for this kind of emergency? How do you plan on communicating with parents if they cannot contact you during a power outage?

If you are prepared for an earthquake, you are prepared for just about anything, because earthquakes do not provide warning. It is just as important to be aware of other potential emergencies around you and prepare for those as well.



All emergency situations cause fear, but knowing you are prepared and sharing your plans with parents adds a

little more security during what can be a terrifying event. Are you prepared to feed, clothe, and keep children for an extended period of time, possibly one or two days?

Follow these six steps to help guide your preparation efforts:

1. Assess your facility: Look for hazards in and around your facility that can lead to injuries.

2. Take responsibility: Prepare before the emergency situation is upon you. Set realistic goals and consult your local emergency management organization for help.

3. Communicate: This piece takes the most effort and is one of the most important steps. Communication with parents, staff and children will provide a sense of security to all involved. Parents will know what your plans are and how they can reach you.

4. Put your plan together: Be specific in your emergency plan as to who will carry out each task. This leaves no room for questions when it comes time to act during a stressful situation.

5. Putting your kits together: The emergency kit should have enough food and water for three days, for each person in the facility. It should also have some tools to help you get away from your facility, should you need to leave.

6. Test your plan: Every good plan requires some practice. Practice helps ensure that staff and children know what to do and where to go, letting you know the children are well taken care of, even during an emergency.

For more information on emergency preparedness call your local emergency management organization, the American Red Cross, or the child care program at your local health department.

What you can learn through the Toll-Free Public Information Line

*By Leslie Edwards-Hill
Licensing Policy Program Manager*

There have been questions regarding the information released to the public on the toll-free line. The toll-free line was established by the legislature to give parents a central place to access information regarding child care homes and centers where they were thinking of placing their children.

Public disclosure laws in this state are very broad. The legislature generally favors the public's right to know. The legislature has recognized that a person has a privacy interest about unfounded complaints of child abuse and/or neglect and that they should remain confidential. This law is in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 26.44.031. Therefore, we do **not** give out information about unfounded Child Protective Services (CPS) complaints about abuse and/or neglect to the public.

The public disclosure law exempts "investigative records" from disclosure if nondisclosure is essential for the protection of any person's right to privacy. (RCW 42.17.310(1)(d)). A person's right to privacy is invaded or violated only if disclosure of information would **both** (1) be highly offensive to a reasonable person and (2) be found to be not of legitimate concern to the public. (RCW 42.17.255). **In the child care situation, the information about the number of complaints would be of legitimate concern to the public.**

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More on how DSHS determines subsidy rates

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in King County (Region 4) went to providers that charged a monthly rate of \$575 or less; thus the DSHS subsidy rate was set at \$575 for full-time preschoolers in King County attending child care centers. The rates for all the categories were set in a similar way.

Why do family home providers get less money than centers for the same aged child?

Generally, in the same community, family home providers charge less than centers. Since the subsidy programs respect the rights of parents to choose the best type of care for their children, rates are set to give parents access to the same percent of family homes and centers.

Why do providers in Eastern Washington get less money for subsidies than providers in Western Washington?

Prices for child care are, in general, higher in Western Washington. If the

subsidy rates did not reflect the different market prices, if there were just one rate statewide, that rate would mean poor families in Seattle would have a much harder time finding a provider to care for their children.

Why not pay one rate across the state?

A single rate across the state would result in a large increase for providers in Eastern Washington, at the expense of rates in Western Washington. A single rate might allow clients in Eastern Washington to purchase 100 percent of the market, while in King County clients might only have access to 30 percent. This would seriously affect the child care choices for clients in Western Washington.

A complete report on the 1998 survey is available online at

http://www.wa.gov/dshs/pubs/7_100LicensedChildCare98.pdf

Toll-Free Public Information Line can aid your search for child care

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The state only gives information regarding "founded" Child Protective Services (CPS) complaints. "Founded" means that more likely than not the provider abused or neglected a child. Licensing complaints are violations of the Minimum Licensing Requirements that do not involve abuse or neglect. The state has been advised by the attorney general's office that licensing complaints and concerns may be disclosed.

The person on the phone discloses "inconclusive" and "invalid" licensing complaints, but also she describes to the caller what those terms mean. "Inconclusive" means that the investigator was not able to determine whether or not an event occurred (for example, conflicting stories from a provider and a parent or child) and "invalid" means that more likely than not the licensing violation did not occur. There is no time frame in which the licensing complaints on a provider's record go away.

The search for a provider's complaint history can be done by telephone number or by name. The ability to search by telephone number is used when all the person inquiring has is a phone number—for example, they may have seen a sign for "Happy Baby Day Care" and a phone number.

Parents searching for safe and loving child care for their child or children do have the right to know a provider's history in order to make an informed decision. You, as a parent, also want to know that your children are safe when placing them in the care of someone you have not met.

Washington State Career and Wage Ladder Pilot Project

We are pleased to announce that Governor Locke has provided funding to maintain and expand this project through the biennium. We hope to be able to include additional centers in 2002 and will keep you informed of future participation opportunities.

The LINK

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